

## **Report of the Fiscal Committee to the Legislative Council**

### **July 11, 2019**

The Legislative Fiscal Committee held one meeting during the 2018 Legislative Interim on September 19, 2018, at the former Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School facility in Vinton, Iowa. The Committee heard presentations from various State agencies as well as representatives from the City of Vinton. The presentations are summarized below:

- **Board of Regents, Vacant Property.** John Nash, Director of Facilities for the Board of Regents, discussed current vacant property at the Regents institutions. Mr. Nash reported that all vacant property is currently spoken for, has been intentionally left for green space and campus beautification, or is earmarked for future facilities for medium- and long-range planning through comprehensive master plans at all five Regents institutions.
- **City of Vinton.** Representatives from the City provided statistics and an update regarding the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School. The current campus size is 48 acres, 11 buildings, and 200,000 usable square feet. Governance of the campus resides with the Board of Regents. As of 2011, the school is no longer a residential facility and most of the property is vacant. Administrative functions of the school were moved to Council Bluffs as of July 1, 2018. The current operating deficit is \$400,000. AmeriCorps and Triple C Properties currently lease approximately 100,000 square feet of the facility.
- **Board of Regents, Institute for Decision Making.** James Hoelscher, Program Manager from the University of Northern Iowa Institute for Decision Making, presented on his program's work with the City of Vinton to assume ownership of the property and to put together a strategic plan and visioning for the property. The Institute helped recruit a team of approximately 25 people to lead a visioning process in February 2017 and to share best practices. The group came up with 10 possible uses for the property and then asked for public input. In April 2017, approximately 125 community members came to the event. The focus of the group was on housing, tourism, and government services, as well as recreation and parks.
- **State Policies on Vacated State-owned Properties.** Janet Phipps, Director of the Department of Administrative Services (DAS), discussed vacated, State-owned property. Each State agency is the owner of its property. DAS provides assistance to State agencies to whatever extent it can with reviewing plans and options on the closing of facilities. The Capitol Complex is under DAS purview.
- **Update on Major Maintenance Projects and Funding.** Director Phipps discussed the Major Maintenance Project Request List. The DAS meets annually with all agencies to discuss needs and to prioritize the list based on life, health, and safety issues. The list constantly changes, depending on agency needs. Major maintenance for State facilities was appropriated \$24.5 million in FY 2019 and \$20.0 million for each of the following four fiscal years.
- **Capitol Building Maintenance Update.** Mark Willemssen, Senior Facilities Manager, participated via conference call and provided an update on the Capitol Complex Dome project.
- **Family First Prevention Services.** Nina William-Mbengue, Program Director from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) Children and Families Program, participated via conference call and provided a brief overview on the new Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). Two major provisions include changes in funding and structure for prevention services and congregate, residential, and group care. Janee Harvey of the Department of Human Services provided an update of the program in Iowa.

Upon adjournment, the Committee was provided a tour of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School.

Materials distributed to the Committee are maintained by the Fiscal Services Division and are available upon request. These documents can also be found on the LSA website at: [www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/meetings/documents?committee=704&ga=ALL](http://www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/meetings/documents?committee=704&ga=ALL)

Respectfully Submitted,

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Senator Michael Breitbach  
Co-chairperson

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Representative Pat Grassley  
Co-chairperson

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